13: Beaglehole & Beaglehole E-5 (1938-1939) 1941
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days, then went back to Ha'akio again. He conjured up some excuse to talk to the girl's mother and to Sepi herself. 584

For the following three months he visited Ha'akio, usually once each week. He discussed marriage with Sepi and when she seemed agreeable, he proceeded to discuss the matter further with her father and relatives. They looked with disfavour on his suit, alleging that he was too young. Probably they were unsure as yet whether this was the best marriage that Sepi could make. After this rebuff, Biukala tried to persuade Sepi to agree to a runaway marriage. She would not, insisting that Biukala must try again to obtain her relatives' assent, as was the proper Tongan custom. (583)

By this time Biukala decided that strong measures were necessary if anything was to come of his courtship. He persuaded his father and four of the older men of his family to go to Ha'akio and consult with the menfolk of Sepi's family. Biukala stayed in Pangai. The men took with them the largest sized root of *kava*, a forty-pound tin of biscuits, and some mats, as a present to Sepi's household. After an all-day *kava*-session together with much discussion, Sepi's family was persuaded to agree to the marriage. This took place the following week. It was the biggest marriage-feast ever held in Pangai. Sepi's father provided about fifty pigs. Biukala's father, feeling that the honour of his household was at stake, added a further seventy pigs to the celebration. 585 574

In elaborating on the virtues of Sepi, Biukala noted that her household was fairly wealthy in pigs and food, that Sepi had spent ten years in a mission-school in Neiafu. She had been well trained in both the arts of Tonga and of the white woman. She was skilful at making *kava*, mats, and bark cloth. She could also cook white man's food, could knit and wash clothes. She was industrious, clean, and had had plenty of experience in bringing up the numerous younger children in her household. Biukala never remarked about his wife's beauty. According to village ideals, indeed, she had little. 584 581 (832)

This account of Biukala emphasizes many facets of village-culture today. There is no suggestion of romantic love. There is a cool weighing of advantages before courtship begins. There is interest in securing a mate who has had opportunity to learn some of the white woman's skills. Knowing her worth in this connection, the girl's family is 584 178

13: Beaglehole & Beaglehole E-5 (1938-1939) 1941
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584 178 not interested in letting her marry the first man who chances to come along. The marriage itself, therefore, is decided upon, not by the young people, but by the older men of the two households. The two young people are sufficiently concerned with older Tongan ways not to cut an apparent knot by elopement and thus to anger their elders.

MARRIAGE

583 585 [588] From our household-census it is possible to present a rough statistical picture of the marital status of all the adults in the village. There are thirty-nine couples living together as man and wife. Of this number, thirty-five couples are married. The marriage ceremonies of these thirty-five couples are of two types. Civil- and church-registrations account for nineteen couples, civil- and church-registrations plus old-time Tongan-style celebrations of the marriage, account for the remaining sixteen couples. Of these thirty-five marriages, twenty-three are between mates whose only marriage is the present one. Twelve marriages are between persons of whom one or both have been previously married. Types of marriage in this category and the number of each are: Single man with divorcée, two; divorcé with single woman, five; widower with single woman, three; widower with widow, two. Of these twelve marriages, therefore, ten are those in which a previously unmarried person mated with someone previously mated. [586] [587] It is thus clear that a previous marriage terminated by death or divorce is no bar to remarriage with a previously unmated person.

586 [435] The cost of a divorce in Tonga is ten pounds per mate, or twenty pounds per divorce. This sum represents the amount that it would take an average householder almost two years to earn by cutting copra on his plantation. It is 586 588 only to be expected therefore, that many unhappy Tongan marriages end not by divorce but by an informal separation which allows the mates to set up unblessed unions with others 588 in like circumstances. If these unions become permanent, the mates are tacitly assumed by the villagers to be as-if married, the children as-if legitimate. The village attitude is more one of pity for misfortune than anything else. There is never any comment, scandal, or gossip about such unions.

13: Beaglehole & Beaglehole E-5 (1938-1939) 1941
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585 This may be best emphasized by outlining the formal
[128] marriage ceremony and then giving a short case-study to show the limit of variations on the pattern.

585 In any formal marriage, much preparation is concerned
583 with the collection of the necessary gifts, transfer of which
431 in the old days constituted the validation of the marriage relationship and which today are still necessary if the marriage is performed according to rule. These gifts are collected together by the father of the groom. They consist of a ceremonial skirt *(vala to'onga)*, six or more specially-made sleeping mats, quantities of bark cloth and clothing. The mats have taken years to make. They have been specially made for some future marriage and have been carefully stored away until needed. Relatives may be asked to contribute further fine mats, in which case they are later repaid with return-gifts of mats. The gifts are all brought together in the house of the groom's father and the bride and her relatives are invited to inspect the display. The groom's father must also bring together great quantities of food, pigs, and *kava*. This preliminary collection may well take a week or more to complete.

585 When all is ready, the groom's sisters escort the bride
[292] to the groom's father's house. There the groom's mother dresses the bride in a *vala* which consists of a four-fathom length of bark cloth. The bride returns to her own house, bathes and dries her body with the bark cloth *vala*. She again returns to the groom's father's house where the father has prepared a small feast. She is accompanied this time by her mother and her mother's sisters. All eat. Then the bride and groom together with a party of relatives go to Neiafu to secure the civil marriage-license. They return to
[793] Pangai, eat more food, and proceed to the church where
[435] the religious ceremony is performed by the pastor. The marriage license costs eight shillings, the marriage ceremony whatever the groom can afford to give the pastor—ten shillings would be a more than adequate gift from the ordinary family. After this the groom goes to his father's
[292] house, the bride to her father's house where she dresses in the ceremonial *vala* provided by the groom's father.

All meet again at the groom's father's house where the gifts of mats and bark cloth have been piled high outside

13: Beaglehole & Beaglehole E-5 (1938-1939) 1941
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585 [591] the bride and groom slept at Semisi's house. Thereafter they went to live with the bride's family in Toula on a sort of extended visit.

585 178 [177] This marriage as just described shows very clearly the blending of old and new. The feasting and gift-giving are Tongan, the civil registration and church-marriage originally white importations, though now none of the villagers but conceives them as anything but right and natural. The necessity for the young people to obtain the consent of their elders before the marriage can be carried out is also well [833] illustrated. Finally, the custom of delaying intercourse for a noticeable period after the marriage ceremony is still strongly observed as one of the customs which no villager would think of breaking.

ELOPEMENT

584 [581] It is obvious from the foregoing accounts of marriage that the elders may and do decide whether a marriage shall occur. Their decision is generally based on a cool calculation of compatibility together with such matters as reputation for industry, relative wealth of the family of the groom, and other materialistic factors. The elders must also be prepared, should they assent to the marriage, with suitable quantities of food and mats for the celebration of the 584 561 178 marriage. Many young people today rebel against this domination by their elders, and many elders (it must be admitted) are not unhappy over this rebellion if it saves them in the expenditure of food and gifts necessary for the proper Tongan marriage. Elopements and marriages without consent of parents are therefore becoming not uncommon 584 583 178 in the village. This is shown by the fact already mentioned, that of thirty-five marriages studied, sixteen only were full-style Tongan marriages, the remaining nineteen being civil- and church-registrations only, without the benefit of gift-giving and feasting.

583 593 Two young people who marry without consent of their parents may return to Pangai if they feel that the anger of their parents is not too great to be faced, or else they may find shelter with distant relatives or friends in far-away villages if parents' ire is great, only returning to Pangai

13: Beaglehole & Beaglehole E-5 (1938-1939) 1941
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when they are sure that high feeling has died down. The groom's father will often give a small feast when the runaway couple returns to Pangai. The bride's parents are generally much more angry, probably because they always feel that a better marriage could have been possible for their daughter. It is not uncommon for the bride's parents to refuse to see either their daughter or her husband for two or more years—and then to relent only when their desire to see their new grandchild becomes overwhelming. Even then, the first overtures to peace always come from the groom. It is hinted to him that the anger of his parents-in-law has abated somewhat. He secures the largest possible pig. Accompanied by his wife, his child and his pig, he comes to Pangai and lays the pig down in front of his parents'-in-law house. If the pig is accepted, and it generally is, then reconciliation occurs and the young couple no longer find it inconvenient or uncomfortable to live away from their home village. Sometimes the parents of both bride and groom agree to celebrate the Tongan side of the marriage forthwith. At other times, they all agree to forget the past, thankful enough that at least the young people are married according to church-ritual.

It is hard to judge the attitude of the villagers to these runaway marriages, or elopements, as compared with their attitude to the more formal marriages. Some young people are inclined to shrug their shoulders and say that the Tongan marriage causes fuss and trouble without adding anything to the validity of the marriage-contract. Older people however, and perhaps the more unthinking young still feel that there is an essential rightness about the Tongan customs and that it is not good to break with them even though one can be legally married without observing them. And certainly, if one's family claims any particular status in the village or enjoys some measure of respect, it would be unthinkable on the part of the elders that the younger members of the family should be married without feasting and gift-giving. One would expect considerable change in the future: generally a tendency for the young to take matters into their own hands, knowing that they need have no shame provided their marriage is church blessed; knowing also that in this way they save their families the expense and trouble of feast-preparation and gift-giving.

18: Collocott M-5 (no date) 1923 OU9 Tonga OU9

the choice of their partners. The young man anticipates the interview with the lady's parents with much the same feelings of confidence or trepidation as animate the breast of his European contemporary in like circumstances. It is not always the good will of the girl's own father that must be won, as his inclinations may often be overborne by his elder brothers, or by his sisters—the "brothers" and "sisters" may of course be cousins near or distant—who are his superiors in the family conclave. The chances are that the lovers' wishes will be met, but the young lady does not as a rule pine in the face of an adverse decision, and the disappointed swain is more likely to find comfort in the reflection that there are other pebbles on the beach, than to indulge gloomy musings upon the unkind fate that has stood between him and his soul-mate. 582 [622] [602]

Occasionally head strong youth refuses to acquiesce in the parental prohibition, and the lovers elope. If they are both of age the Government permit to marry cannot be withheld, the religious ceremony follows as a matter of course, and the happy, or almost happy, couple wait with a confidence, which experience usually shows to be well founded, that the resentment of their kin will be short-lived, and that, like the philosophers they are, they will accept the inevitable, and acknowledge the undutiful son and daughter by a performance of the proper nuptial rites. 583

The youth who goes a-courting is frequently moved to call the muse to his aid, and to tell his adoration in "songs of sweet-scented flowers," compositions which, though rather rough in form, display much poetic feeling both for love and some of the beauties of nature. 584 533

The old practice seems to have been for the matron's hair to be cut differently from the maiden's. The virgin wore two long locks at the back of the head, but at marriage these were cut off, and the hair then allowed to grow an equal length all over the head. 302 881 836 585

Although marriage was marked by extensive ritual the bond was easily terminable. No life-long guarantees were expected or given. Late in the eighteenth century one of the artisans in the party sent by the London Missionary Society to Tonga fell in love with a Tongan girl, and a date was fixed for the marriage. Previous to the ceremony the missionaries explained to the young lady the nature of the bond she was about to contract, but at the mention of a life-long union she promptly refused to go on with the matter. She was quite prepared for a union for as long as their mutual liking dictated, but would not be bound "till death do you part." 586

The great chiefs had numerous harems, but it cannot be inferred that there was any degrading inferiority of women. The Tongan, indeed, is justly proud of the position which his women-folk have always enjoyed. Genealogies show that great ladies frequently had many lovers. The system was free and easy, and the women fared 595 562

46: Decktor Korn E-5 (1969-1970) 1978 OU9 Tonga OU9
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582 situation by presenting the certificate of civil regis-
794 tration of the marriage as a fait accompli.[10] Long-term
795 refusal to have anything to do with the couple after this would almost certainly be viewed as too extreme. I was told of how one formidable old woman of the Free Wesleyan Church, incensed at her grand-daughter's announced intention to marry a Roman Catholic, tore off her clothes and rolled naked on the floor to express her anger and contempt. I saw no sign of these objections, however, in her present behavior towards her grand-daughter and little great-grandchildren (who are being raised as Roman Catholics).

In most situations of inter-denominational marriage, one member of the couple switches to the other's denomination. There were only four cases among couples living in Motulahi in 1970 where the husband and wife were not of the same denomination. (All involve marriages of long standing and/or older people; in each of these cases the woman is prominent in the community, although it is not clear to me whether this prominence is a cause or consequence of her denominational independence.) There is no

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[583] 10 It is my impression that there is a high proportion of elopement, nowadays--at least on the island of Tongatapu --even where the couple are of the same denomination; so much so that this cannot be regarded as merely deviant [585] behavior. By 'elopment' (mali hola) I refer to the practice of being married in secret; that is, with few or no close family members being present. All that is necessary is to register the marriage at the Public Records Office; no religious ceremony is required.

55: Anderson D,T-5 (1777) 1967 OU9 Tonga OU9

548 scrupled at our most intimate connexions with their women for a very moderate price, and absolutely converted it into a fix'd article
836 of trade to their no small emolument. It should not however be under-
837 stood that this is without exception universal, as there are many women who either from their connections, natural timidity, or absolute aversion to such promiscuous engagements are not pregnable on any terms, independent of those who are understood to be married.

This extensive and gentle empire which Love has planted amongst them is so far from loosening that it cements the bands of Society. The sexes seem to live in the most perfect harmony undisturb'd by jealousy on either side,[1] and what is perhaps still more uncommon, that almost universal passion seems to be quite a stranger amongst
583 the female part with respect to each other. Amongst the various lovers that present themselves it may be easily suppos'd a woman will soon discover, either from interest or desire, one whom she would wish to attach herself to, & he probably from her assiduity to please will be fix'd from roving, from whence it is not uncommon to see such cases before a lasting union is agreed on as far as we could perceive
[163] from circumstances. When that has taken place the domestic felicity
[599] seems to increase; for as they often become mothers at an early age their affection for their children and care in providing for them excites their industry in conjunction with that of the husband, and soon obliterates their wish for such unstable connections as before
855 that period. When they cease to bear children they appear to gain
888 instead of lose respect, and though they then appear to have some weight in the management of the younger sort it seems ultimately to be left to the decision of the men, who though absolute excercise their power in a very gentle manner except in a few cases.

765 Their mutual affection does not cease on this side of the grave, nor can they believe that death bereaves them of the merit of expressing their long grief by removing the object from their sight, and rendering
[764] it unsusceptible of the various proofs of their kindness. Nothing however does them greater credit nor can be a greater proof of their humanity than the concern the[y] show for and decent disposal of
765 the dead. Their mourning is, to use a common expression, not in
304 words but deeds, for besides the Tooge, burnt circles and scars mention'd before they beat the teeth with stone[s], strike a sharks tooth into the head untill the blood flows in streams and thrust spears into the inner part of the thigh, the sides below the armpits, and through the cheeks into the mouth—all operations that convey

[1] But cf. p. 962 below, where a commoner and a chief's wife were concerned.

79: Lātūkefu H,1,M-4,5 (1964-1965) 1974
(1822-1875)
OU9 Tonga OU9

man had his own wife at Tonga many evils would be avoided and many sins destroyed'. In order to safeguard marriage Section 8 decreed that a deserted wife might claim her husband's plantations and property while a woman who deserted her husband should be brought back to him; if she refused to remain she could not lawfully remarry during her husband's lifetime.

It should be pointed out that marriages in Tonga were frequently arranged, by one's parents or by a chief, without reference to the wishes of the couple who were betrothed. A marriage was entered simply by the woman cohabiting with a man under his roof and protection. She was expected to remain with her husband until such time as he might choose to divorce her. Mariner estimated that about two-thirds of the married women in Tonga had been divorced and married again several times. The missionaries condemned this custom, not only because they regarded it as immoral and sinful, but also because it had led to several murders, when men of lower rank had married the former wives of superior chiefs.

The great emphasis which was placed on the holiness of the Sabbath and of church services by the missionaries is clearly and unequivocally reflected in Section 2, which exhorts people to abstain from work on the Sabbath day and to attend places of worship, and which makes it an offence for anyone to disturb the service or insult the minister of the congregation.

Another distinct feature of the Code is the importance given to industrious habits and the cultivation of the land. Many missionaries complained bitterly because the Tongans appeared to them incredibly indolent. In a letter to the General Secretary of the mission, the Reverend John Whewell asserted that the Tongans were naturally indolent. 'Only the old and married people', he wrote, 'profess to work. The young people spend their time up to manhood in supreme indolence or in what is worse—voyaging from group to group' (Whewell to Eggleston, 4 Aug. 1856, WMMSA 1852-79, item 170). A few, on the other hand, argued that the people were not entirely an idle race. Their aversion to work was mainly due to the abundance of natural resources from which their simple wants were supplied. Hence, there was no strong incentive for them to work, but when it appeared necessary

/66 cont./

585 The marriage was, of course, entered into only in accordance with
581 ancient Tongan custom (festivity). The legal marriage (registration)
and the church wedding may have contributed to a certain stabilization
583 of marriage. "Flight marriages" (that is, lovers who are of age
585 marrying against the will of their parents by fleeing to another
178 island in the Archipelago and registering their marriage there) which
565 occasionally takes place today, probably did not occur in ancient
Tonga in this form. For the commoners (190)

190. The great majority of commoners were farmers (compare J. Martin, loc. cit. II. p. 300).

were bound to the soil far more than they are today. They cultivated
[427] the land of the chiefs which the latter /67/ lent them against duties,
[571] and they were so greatly dependent on their masters that they were
permitted under no circumstances to change from one territorial
565 jurisdiction to another. Working his individual land naturally gave
585 the commoner more freedom. The far fewer economic burdens probably
178 had a beneficial effect on family life, for they usually gave it a
581 sounder basis.--From the preceding account and the figures given it
[590] becomes clear that the family has remained predominantly patrilocal
[611] and patrilinear. The way of life of commoners in pre-European times
[582] suggests that the marriage partners came from the same locality even
more than is the case today.

565 A considerable change took place in the family life of nobles.
178 As a result of the Christianization of the Archipelago they gave up
595 polygamy, apparently with littly resistance, and today they lead a
married life resembling that of commoners. Monogamy is thus
593 practiced by all the people, at least outwardly. While wives are
837 mostly faithful to their husbands, many husbands take the liberty of
[178] having affairs with other girls or women. This is apparently an

/80 cont./

585 and ecclesiastical ceremonies were simply added, just as other
177 European characteristics (for example, the large canisters of
178 zwieback which today are so important) were adopted as a matter of
585 course, so that everything has undergone an amicable fusion. The
565 upper classes (231)
178

231. These very probably practiced all such customs even in olden times more extensively and conscientiously than did the broad masses.

--up to the royal house--cling more tenaciously than the commoners to the old wedding customs (with respect to clothing as well as the
585 punctiliously preserved ceremony). Probably the lavish use of Tongan
565 apparel seen at many weddings of commoners is not to be interpreted as
292 tradition handed down from olden times, since the broad masses were
178 formerly obliged to work for the nobles; (232)

[422]

232. Compare J. Martin (loc. cit. II. p. 109) on the women of the lower classes in ancient Tonga: "...what they make is not their own property, but is done by order of their superiors." /cited in English/

rather, most of the people probably /81/ gradually came into possession of valuable mats and long lengths of tapa only after their "liberation," in respectful but purposive imitation of upper-class customs.

585 Today, among commoners, it may also come about that young couples
583 --with the silent approval of their parents--stage a "flight marriage,"
178 that is to say, run away and have a civil and church marriage. This saves the parents the economic burden of the wedding celebration.
585 That, along with the rather frequent abolishing at the regular
178 marriage of the delayed consummation, (233)

[565]

233. According to E.W. Gifford (Tongan Society, p. 193), the marriage among commoners was in former times consummated during the first